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ABSTRACT

A study was done to explore interviewers' and interviewees' perceptions of the appropriateness and frequency of initiating dual career issues in the interview process in academic settings. The study included participants from two midwestern universities. A total of 113 department heads received questionnaires through campus mail. Approximately one half received questionnaires indicating that the quesions addressed dual career issues together with a cover letter explaining the nature of the study. The other half received questionnaires that identified the issues only as relevant to the selection interview. Forty questionnaires usable for analysis were returned. In addition, letters and questionnaires were sent to 250 members of dual career couples of whom 117 sent back usable returns. Analysis of the responses found that interview topics viewed as highly appropriate for interviewees to initiate concerned promotions, vacation schedules, and schools for children. Topics viewed as less appropriate included children's issues, spouse's career, and commuter marriages. Information indicated that candidate initiation of child care or maternity issues was considered negative. Most department heads indicated that dual career issues should be raised during the interview by the interviewee especially if the candidate wants assistance for the spouse. The report contains specific recommendations for department heads and candidates. (Contains 28 references.) (JB)

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THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW: EXAMINING DUAL CAREER COUPLE ISSUES

Paper Presented to The Applied Communication Section

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INTRODUCTION

The selection interview is the most widely used technique for hiring new employees. In the 1990s, interviewing and hiring practices have begun to change because of the changing American work force. More females are moving into career paths. Only 6% of all Americans still live in families with a working father, a homemaker mother, and dependent children (Small, 1988). The change in the dynamics of families requires interviewers to examine issues not only relevant to families where both husband and wife work, but more specifically to issues which are salient to couples who are both pursuing careers or what has been termed a "dual career couple." Dual career couples, already comprise over half of American married couples, and the number is expected to increase (Rosenfeld & Welsh, 1985).

Organizations are beginning to realize that changes in interviewing practices may be needed to accommodate prospective job candidates whose employment decision must consider a spouse's career and a family. Blum (1990) reported that in a few fields, 78% of doctoral hires involved recruitment of dual career couples. There is a real need for understanding, as precisely as possible, what dual career issues can and should be addressed in a selection interview especially in light of the current job market and changing demographic patterns.

While there has been a substantial amount of research that has examined the employment interview (Wagner, 1949; Mayfield,1964; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wright, 1969; Schmidt, 1976; Arvey & Campion, 1982; Harris, 1989), research which specifically addresses the dual career couple in the selection interview process is sparse. Despite the increase in the number of dual career

couples, there has been little research which examines the issues surrounding dual career couples from an organizational perspective (Le-Louran & Decotis, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). Studies which specifically investigate dual career issues in academic arenas are sorely lacking.

The term "dual career," originally coined by Rapoport and Rapoport (1969) defined the dual career couple as "one which both heads of household pursue careers and at the same time maintain a family life together" (1971, p. 510). While not all selection interview topics are "unique" to the dual career couple, some issues such as the interviewee's spouse and family issues are particularly relevant.

Hall and Hall (1978) suggested that individuals in a dual career relationship rejected jobs, promotions, and transfers which were incongruent with personal and family goals. Since the interviewer may be reluctant to ask certain questions, they maintained that interviewers were relieved when an interviewee brings the couple's situation out in the open so that both parties possess valid information. The paradox is that many interviewees are reluctant to discuss issues for fear of being considered unwilling to make personal sacrifices or fear that discussing an issue will negatively affect his or her chances of being hired. This fear is not completely unfounded.

Le-Louran and Decotis (1983) found that decision makers were reluctant to transfer individuals who were part of a dual career couple. Those more likely to be transferred were candidates in single career relationships or those whose spouses were employed only in a support capacity. They also suggested decision makers were reluctant to hire or promote members of a dual career couple due to the risk for the organization. While there is no empirical research

relevant to hiring dual career couples on college campuses, couples in academia may face similar situations in that universities may be reluctant to hire both individuals at the same university.

Morgan (1991) indicated that some institutions have incorporated the "trailing spouse" as part of a recruitment strategy. He suggested that, with the number of minority Ph.D.s declining, employing the trailing spouse could be a way of attracting two faculty members. Blum (1990) indicated that increased competition for professors has led some universities to provide job assistance to spouses. Guinn (1989) maintained that 60% of all employee transfers involved dual career couples and that the figure would increase to 75% by 1991.

Catalyst, a New York-based resource center for businesswomen, reported that spouse assistance programs were more effective when offered "up front" as a part of formal policy, and that policies should be reinforced through conversations with employees. "If the corporate management does not acknowledge problems experienced by two-career couples, many employees, especially men, may feel uncomfortable raising the issue" ("Moving the Two Career Couple," 1986, p. 56).

Why is there a trend in the increase of dual career couples? First, and most obvious, is the rapid increase of the number of married women in career-oriented positions. Spicer (1986) reported:

1. Between 1947 and 1975, the number of working husbands increased 27% while the number of working wives increased by 205%.
2. In 1950, 29.6% of the civilian labor force was female; in 1981, 43% was female.

3. In 1950, 24.8% of the female population was married and working; in 1981, that had risen to 51.7%.
4. In 1950, 24% of all bachelor degrees, 30% of all masters, and 9% of all doctorates went to female candidates; in 1981, 48% of all bachelors, 51% of all masters, and 32% of all doctorates went to females. (p. 258)

Secondly, there has been a shift in values of individuals in the work force from the traditional "success ethic" toward a "quality of life" ethic. Two incomes may be necessary for the life styles couples wish to lead, but a career is also seen as a key to life/career choices (Hall & Hall, 1978).

Female candidates may have additional concerns. Females are perceived as more of a liability than males in the work environment because they usually follow their husband and might not return to work after having children (Guinn & Russell, 1987). Yet, in an investigation of 175 dual career families, Sekaran (1982) found no significant difference in the perceived career salience of men and women. Thirty-five couples in the sample were from a university setting. She concluded that females involved in a dual career marriage saw their careers as central to their lives.

Commuter marriage and child care situations are other issues facing some dual career couples. Winfield (1986) estimated that one million couples may be in a commuter marriage with each person living in a different city. Stauberg (1987) claimed that organizations must face the child care need demanded by working couples.

The intent of this study was to fill a gap in the interviewing literature relevant to issues dealing with dual career couples in academic settings. The

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study explored interviewers and interviewees perceptions of the appropriateness and frequency of initiating dual career issues in the interview process.

METHOD

The study included participants from two midwestern universities, where student populations ranged between 20 and 26 thousand. A total of 113 department heads received questionnaires through campus mail. Approximately one half received questionnaires indicating that the questions addressed dual career issues and a cover letter explaining the nature of the study. The other half received questionnaires that identified the issues only as selection interview. Fifty-three questionnaires were returned through campus mail resulting in a response rate of 45%; 40 were usable for data analysis.

A cover letter explaining the nature of the study and a questionnaire were sent to 250 individuals who were members of a dual career couple. One hundred seventeen usable returns were analyzed.

Demographic data for all participants included age, marital status, number of children, ages of children, and dual career status. Department heads were also asked how long they had been in a position to interview job candidates. The mean age for the total sample was 44 years, with a median of 45 and a mode of 47. The average age of department heads was 51 years. Of the total sample 70% were male and 30% were female. Of the department heads, 90% were male and 10% were female. Of the total sample, 93% were married, 3% were single, and 3% divorced. Sixty percent of the participants had at least two children with ages ranging from less than one year to 37 years. Fifty-seven percent of the department heads had been interviewing candidates for over 10 years.

Forty individuals from the participants who returned questionnaires were selected to be interviewed; 20 from each of the two universities. The sample was further broken down by dual career member, department head, and gender. From each university five male and five female members of a dual career were interviewed. Ten department heads were interviewed from each university, however only two of the total number (20) interviewed were female. The other three female department heads who returned questionnaires were unavailable for interviews.

Procedures

Department heads and individuals identified as a member of a dual career couple completed a questionnaire in which they rated the appropriateness and frequency of initiating 15 dual career topics. The appropriateness level, based on a 5-point Likert scale where 1= very inappropriate, 2= inappropriate, 3= somewhat appropriate, 4= appropriate, and 5= very appropriate, addressed the following dual career issues: (1) spouse's career, (2) spouse's attitude about geographic moves, (3) interviewee's attitude about geographic moves, (4) transfers, (5) child care issues, (6) schools for children, (7) children issues in general, (8) attitudes about working late, (9) employee assistance programs, (10) promotions, (11) commuter marriages, (12) maternity policies, (13) paternity policies, (14) vacation schedules, and (15) flexible working hours.

A 5-point Likert scale, 1= never, 2= seldom, 3= sometimes, 4= often, and 5= always determined how often interviewers and interviewees initiated dual career issues. Interviewers were also asked to respond to how often interviewees initiated the 15 dual career issues identified above, and interviewees were asked to respond to how often interviewers initiated the dual career issues.

Message data were collected by interviewing 20 department heads and 20 individuals who were members of a dual career marriage. The interviews followed an adapted version of the memorable message interview schedule developed by Knapp, Stohl and Reardon (1981) and Stohl (1986). Participants were asked to remember messages they heard and talked about and which were viewed as appropriate or inappropriate in the selection interview. All participants consented to be tape recorded.

Analysis

Questionnaire. Interviewers' and interviewees' perceptions of appropriateness were determined for each of the 15 dual career issues. A mean response at or above 2.5 was deemed appropriate, while anything below 2.5 was considered inappropriate. A repeated measures multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAS) was conducted to determine if there were differences between interviewers' and interviewers' perception of appropriateness and frequency of topics initiated. Demographic data: age, dual career status, gender, and age of youngest child were analyzed using a series of multiple regression analyses.

Interview Data. The interview data gathered from memorable messages were content analyzed using the 15 categories. Other categories also emerged from the data. Interview tapes were transcribed and appropriate and inappropriate messages were selected. Data were coded by two trained coders to verify the predetermined and emergent categories. Overall coder agreement was 89%. Chi-square analyses were used to identify differences between messages that department heads and candidates remembered hearing and initiating.

RESULTS

Interviewees rated all 15 dual career topics as "somewhat appropriate" to "very appropriate" for interviewees to initiate. The highest mean response was 4.91 for the topic of promotions. The lowest mean response was 2.98 for discussing a commuter marriage. Mean responses for the other topics fell between 3.38 and 4.44. Table 1 ranks the topics from highest to lowest on the appropriateness dimension.

Examination of the frequency of responses on the 15 topics showed that even though interviewees thought that all topics were in the appropriate range, they initiated them "seldom" to "sometimes." Interviewees indicated that they most frequently initiated the topic of children's issues (M= 3.39) and least often initiated the topics of vacation schedules (M= 2.24) and commuter marriages (M= 2.26).

Table 1

Interviewees' Perceptions of Appropriateness of Topics Initiated by Interviewees and Frequency of Initiation

Topic	Appropriateness	Frequency
Promotions	4.91	2.95
Vacation schedules	4.44	2.24
Flexible hours	4.44	3.09
Transfers	4.35	3.22
Assistance programs	4.24	2.61
Maternity policies	4.22	2.63
Paternity policies	4.18	2.43
Working late	4.16	2.44
Schools for children	4.11	2.63
EE attitude re move	4.02	2.70
Child care	3.96	3.32
Spouse's career	3.42	3.17
Children's issues	3.40	3.39
Spouse's attitude re move	3.38	2.98
Commuter marriage	2.98	2.26

N= 80

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As shown in Table 2, interviewers also rated all 15 topics as "appropriate" for an interviewee to initiate. Even though interviewers perceived all 15 topics as "appropriate," they reported that interviewees "seldom" initiated paternity policies and commuter marriage. Interviewers viewed promotions as the most appropriate topic (M= 4.91) and commuter marriage as least appropriate (M= 3.42) for interviewee initiation. Interviewers indicated that interviewees most frequently initiated the topic of promotions (M= 4.12) and commuter marriage the least (M=1.97).

Table 2

Interviewer's Perceptions of Appropriateness of Topics Initiated by Interviewees and Frequency of Initiation

Topic	Appropriateness	Frequency
Promotions	4.91	4.12
Schools for children	4.60	3.50
Vacation schedules	4.60	3.37
Transfers	4.54	3.22
EE attitude re move	4.52	3.45
Flexible working hours	4.52	3.00
Maternity policies	4.48	2.60
Paternity policies	4.26	2.10
Assistance programs	4.24	2.42
Child care	4.15	2.92
Working late	4.15	2.77
Spouse's attitude re move	4.06	3.15
Children's issues	3.97	2.90
Spouse's career	3.84	3.30
Commuter marriage	3.42	1.97

N= 80

Interviewees' and Interviewers' Perceptions of Appropriateness and Frequency of Interviewer Initiated Topics

Interviewees perceived 14 of the 15 topics as appropriate for interviewers to initiate. The topic of promotions ranked highest with a mean of 4.67. Only the topic of commuter marriage (M= 2.40) was viewed as inappropriate for the interviewer to initiate.

Even though interviewees thought all but one topic was appropriate for interviewers to initiate, they reported that 14 of the 15 topics were "seldom" to "sometimes" initiated by the interviewer (see Table 3). Commuter marriage was seldom initiated (M = 2.32).

Table 3

Interviewees' Perception of Appropriateness of Topics Initiated by Interviewers and Frequency of Initiation

Topic	Appropriateness	Frequency
Promotions	4.67	3.92
Transfers	4.33	3.39
Vacation	4.26	3.36
Working late	4.24	2.85
Flexible hours	4.22	3.17
Assistance programs	4.13	2.88
Maternity	4.06	2.93
EE attitude re move	4.02	3.39
Paternity policies	4.00	2.54
Schools for Children	3.82	3.04
Child care	3.60	2.63
Children's Issues	3.20	2.54
Spouse's attitude re move	2.80	2.70
Spouse's Career	2.78	2.78
Commuter Marriage	2.40	2.32

N= 80

In contrast, interviewers reported that 12 of the 15 topics were appropriate for interviewers to initiate (see Table 4). Promotions were considered most appropriate (M = 4.82) followed by vacations (M = 4.66) and flexible schedules (M = 4.61). Three topics were viewed as inappropriate: discussion of a spouse's career (M= 2.54), the interviewee's spouse's attitude about a geographic move (M = 2.54), and commuter marriage (M = 2.09).

When asked how frequently these topics were initiated, interviewers indicated that only seven of the 15 topics were initiated very often (see Table 4). Interviewers reported that they initiated the topic of promotions most often (M=4.32) and almost never brought up the topic of commuter marriage

(M=1.52). Topics seldom initiated included: spouse's attitude about a move (M= 2.05), spouse's career (M= 2.10), child care (M= 1.85), assistance programs (M= 1.90), paternity (M= 1.84), and maternity policies (M= 2.32). Although interviewers perceived that most topics were appropriate for them to initiate, they seldom did so.

Table 4

Interviewers' Perception of Appropriateness of Topics Initiated by Interviewers and Frequency of Initiation

Topic	Appropriateness	Frequency
Promotions	4.82	4.32
Vacation schedules	4.66	3.85
Flexible schedules	4.61	3.47
Transfers	4.12	3.18
Maternity	4.09	2.32
EE attitude re move	4.06	3.35
Schools	3.84	2.75
Paternity policies	3.66	1.85
Working late	3.58	2.58
Assistance programs	3.42	1.90
Children's issues	2.76	2.30
Child care	2.58	1.85
Spouse's career	2.54	2.10
Spouse's attitude re move	2.54	2.05
Commuter marriage	2.09	1.52

N= 80

Results of Difference Testing

The term "role" refers to the interviewer (department head) or interviewee (member of a dual career marriage). "Referent" refers to whose perspective one is considering when answering the question. For example, interviewees were asked whether they thought it was appropriate for them and the interviewer to initiate topics relevant to dual career issues. Thus, referent indicates whether the respondents were considering themselves or the interviewer's perspective. The term "topic" refers to the 15 predetermined issues examined in the study.

To assess whether the topics were uniquely dual career issues or whether the topics could relate to any individual interviewing for a position, a MANOVA was conducted to test for differences between the two types of questionnaires administered to interviewers. There were no significant main effects for interviewer type for appropriateness (F (1, 31) = 2.47, p < .12) or for frequency (F (1,38) = .01, p < .94). Analyses also showed no significant two-way or three-way interaction effects for either appropriateness: Interviewer Type X Referent (F(1,31) = .13, p < .71), Interviewer Type X Topic (F (14,18) .71, p < .73), Interviewer Type X Referent X Topic (F(14,18) = .98, p < .50) or frequency: Interviewer Type X Referent (F (1,38) = .07, p < .78), Interviewer Type X Topic (F (14,25)= .59, p < .84), Interviewer Type X Referent X Topic (F (14,25) = .82, p < .63). Thus, whether an interviewer felt he/she was responding to the questions based on dual career issues or just a selection interview issue made no difference in the way the interviewer responded. Therefore, responses for the two interviewer types were combined for the remainder of the analyses.

Results of Appropriateness Difference Testing

The results of the MANOVA for appropriateness revealed no significant main effect for role (F (1,76) = .08, p < .77). A significant main effect was revealed, however, for referent (F (1,76) = 48.97, p < .0005) and topic (F (14,63) = 30.38, p < .0005). Analyses also showed three significant two-way interaction effects: Role X Referent (F (1,76) = 12.24, p < .001), Referent X Topic (F (14,63) = 3.66, p < .0005), and Role X Topic (F (14,63) = 3.47, p < .005). Further analyses revealed a significant three-way Role X Referent X Topic interaction, (F (14,63) = 2.63, p < .005). A summary of the MANOVA results is provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Interviewers' and Interviewees' Responses for Appropriateness of Topics Initiated: MANOVA Analyses

	df	*F*	*p*
Role	1,76	.08	.77
Referent	1,76	48.97	.0005
Topic	14,63	30.38	.0005
Role X Referent	1,76	12.24	.001
Referent X Topic	14, 63	3.66	.0005
Role X Topic	14,63	3.47	.0005
Role X Referent X Topic	14,63	2.63	.005

To clarify the nature of the Role X Referent X Topic interaction, tests of simple main effects followed the procedures outlined in Winer (1971). Means which differed significantly are identified in Table 6. There was a significant difference between interviewers' and interviewees' perception of appropriateness of topics depending on whose frame of reference was considered. Interviewees considered it significantly more appropriate for interviewers to initiate issues about a spouse's career, the interviewee's spouse's attitude about a geographic move, child care, children's issues, working late, assistance programs, commuter marriages, and paternity policies than did interviewers. Interviewees considered it significantly less appropriate for interviewers to initiate the topics of vacations and flexible working hours than interviewers felt it was for them to do so.

Table 6

Tests of Simple Main Effects for Role X Referent X Topic Interaction for Appropriateness of Topics Initiated

	Referent: When thinking about interviewers	
	Role	
Topic	**EE**	**IR**
Spouse's career	2.78*	2.54*
Spouse's attitude re move	2.80*	2.54*
EE attitude re move	4.02	4.06
Transfers	4.33	4.12
Child care	3.60*	2.58*
Schools for children	3.82	3.84
Children's issues in general	3.20*	2.76*
Working late	4.24*	3.58*
Assistance programs	4.13*	3.42*
Promotions	4.66	4.82
Commuter marriages	2.40*	2.09*
Maternity policies	4.06	4.09
Paternity policies	4.00*	3.66*
Vacation schedules	4.26*	4.66*
Flexible working hours	4.22*	4.60*
	Referent: When thinking about interviewees	
	Role	
Topic	**EE**	**IR**
Spouse's career	3.42*	3.84*
Spouse's attitude re move	3.38*	4.06*
EE attitude re move	4.02*	4.52*
Transfers	4.36	4.54
Child care	3.96	4.15
Schools for children	4.11*	4.60*
Children's issues in general	3.40*	3.97*
Working late	4.16	4.15
Assistance programs	4.24	4.24
Promotions	4.91	4.90
Commuter marriages	2.97	3.42
Maternity policies	4.22*	4.48*
Paternity policies	4.18	4.36
Vacation schedules	4.44	4.60
Flexible working hours	4.44	4.52

N= 78. EE=interviewee; IR= Interviewer

* EE and IR appropriateness ratings for topic differ significantly at $p < .0005$.

When considering the frame of reference of the interviewee, interviewees and interviewers differed significantly in their views of the appropriateness of certain topics. Interviewers reported that it was more

appropriate for interviewees to initiate the issues of spouse's career, interviewee's spouse's attitude about a geographic move, interviewee's attitude about a geographic move, schools for children, children's issues, and maternity policies than interviewees thought it was for them to do.

Results of Frequency Difference Testing

The results of the MANOVA for frequency revealed no main effect for role (F (1,79) = .80, $p < .37$). A significant main effect was produced for referent (F (1,79) = 6.73, $p < .01$) and for topic (F (14, 66) = 30.68, $p < .0005$). Analyses also showed three significant two-way interaction effects for: Role X Referent (F (1,79) = 9.99, $p < .002$), Referent X Topic (F (14, 66) = 2.94, $p < .002$), and Role X Topic (F (14,66) = 2.42, $p < .008$). The three-way Role X Referent X Topic interaction only approached significance (F (14,66) = 1.76, $p < .06$). Table 7 summarizes the MANOVA results.

Table 7

Interviewers' and Interviewees' Responses on Frequency of Topics Initiated: MANOVA Analyses

	df	F	p
Role	1,79	.80	.37
Referent	1,79	6.73	.011
Topic	14,66	30.68	.0005
Role X Referent	1,79	9.99	.002
Referent X Topic	14,66	2.94	.002
Role X Topic	14,66	2.42	.008
Role X Referent X Topic	14,66	1.76	.064

To clarify the nature of the three significant two-way interaction effects, tests of simple main effects were conducted following the procedures outlined in Winer (1971). The Role X Topic interaction means which differed significantly are identified in Table 8. Interviewees thought that the topics of assistance programs and commuter marriages occurred more frequently than did

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interviewers. Interviewers and interviewees agreed in their frequency assessments of the other topics, identifying promotions as the most initiated topic and commuter marriages as the least initiated.

Table 8

Tests of Simple Main Effects for Role X Topic Interaction Based on Frequency of Topics Initiated

	Role	
Topic	EE	IR
Spouses' career	2.88	2.7
Spouse's attitude re move	2.71	2.6
EE attitude re move	3.30	3.4
Transfers	3.36	3.19
Child care	2.63	2.38
Schools for children	3.22	3.12
Children's issues	2.49	2.6
Working late	2.73	2.66
Assistance programs	2.92*	2.16*
Promotions	3.97	4.22
Commuter marriages	2.29*	1.75*
Maternity policies	2.78	2.46
Paternity policies	2.49	1.98
Vacation schedules	3.30	3.61
Flexible working hours	3.13	3.23

N= 81 EE = interviewee; IR= Interviewer
EE and IR frequency ratings for topic differ significantly at $p < .0005$.

Results of the tests for the simple main effects for the Referent X Topic interaction indicated that both interviewers an interviewees perceived that the topics of spouse's career, the spouse's attitude about a geographic move, child care, schools, children's issues, and assistance programs were more frequently initiated by interviewees than by interviewers. In contrast, they indicated that the topics of vacation schedules and flexible working hours were more frequently initiated by interviewers than interviewees.

Table 9

Tests of Simple Main Effects for Referent X Topic Interaction Based on Frequency of Topics Initiated

	Referent	
	EE	IR
Spouse's career	3.14*	2.44*
Spouse's attitude re move	2.92*	2.38*
EE attitude re move	3.33	3.37
Transfers	3.27	3.28
Child care	2.78*	2.24*
Schools for children	3.44*	2.90*
Children's issues	2.66*	2.42*
Working late	2.69	2.72
Assistance programs	2.69*	2.39*
Promotions	4.06	4.12
Commuter marriages	2.12	1.92
Maternity policies	2.61	2.63
Paternity policies	2.27	2.19
Vacation schedules	3.30*	3.61*
Flexible working hours	3.04*	3.32*

N= 81 EE= Interviewee; IR= Interviewer
EE and IR frequency ratings for referent differ significantly at $p < .0005$.

Results of the tests for simple main effects for the Role X Referent interaction indicated that interviewers perceived that they initiated all topics less frequently than did interviewees. Interviewees thought that both parties initiated the topics with equal frequency.

Table 10

Tests of Simple Main Effects for Role X Referent Interaction Based on Frequency of Topics Initiated

		Referent	
		IR	EE
Role	IR	2.62_a	2.93_b
	EE	2.96_b	2.98_b

N= 81
Note: Means with different subscripts differ significantly at $p < .05$.

Overall findings relevant to interviewers' and interviewees' perceptions of appropriateness and frequency indicated that both felt most topics were appropriate to initiate even though not all of the 15 topics were frequently initiated.

Results of Demographic Analyses

Demographic variables were investigated to determine whether they may have accounted for the judgments of appropriateness and frequency of the 15 topics. To examine the predictive value of gender, dual career status, age of youngest child, and age of subject, a multiple regression was conducted on all variables using simultaneous entry at four steps. Individual predictor variables were entered on step one, two-way interactions on step two, three-way interactions on step three, and four-way interactions on step four. Whether a participant was an interviewer or interviewee was also entered as a variable under the label "role." Each of the 15 topics for appropriateness and frequency were entered as dependent variables in separate regression analyses. Of the topics investigated, only spouse's career, flexible working hours, working late, children, and maternity policies reached appropriate significance levels. Even though these topics were significant they explained only a small proportion (an average of 7%) of the variance for appropriateness and frequency judgments.

Analyses of Memorable Message Data

For the purposes of reporting the results of the interview data, the term "department head" is used to refer to "interviewer" and the term "candidate" is used for "interviewee."

Messages Considered Appropriate by Department Heads and Candidates

When department heads were asked what dual career topics they remembered initiating that were appropriate, six categories emerged (see Table 11). The topic that department heads remembered initiating the most was schools for children (38.85%). The topics they remembered initiating the least were spouse's attitude about a geographic move (5.5%), issues about children (5.5%), and working late (5.5%).

When candidates were asked what messages they remembered initiating about dual career topics that were appropriate, seven categories emerged (see Table 19). The topic most often remembered being initiated by candidates was spouse's career (62.55%). The topics least often initiated were commuter marriages (4.17%), maternity policies (4.17%), flexible working hours (4.17%), and marital status (4.17%).

Table 11

Appropriate Messages Department Heads and Candidates Remembered Initiating

Category	Department Heads n=20		Candidates n=20		Chi-square
	Number of messages	% of total	Number of messages	% of total	χ^2
Schools for children	7	38.85	3	12.34	27.46*
Spouse's career	3	16.65	15	62.55	55.20**
Quality of life	3	16.65	–	–	33.30**
EE attitude re move	2	11.10	–	–	22.20*
Spouse's attitude re move	1	5.55	–	–	11.10
Issues re children	1	5.55	–	–	11.10
Working late	1	5.55	–	–	11.10
Child care	–	–	2	8.34	16.68
Commuter marriage	–	–	1	4.17	8.34
Maternity	–	–	1	4.17	8.34
Flexible working hours	–	–	1	4.17	8.34
Marital status	–	–	1	4.17	8.34
Totals	18	100	24	100	

* Significant at .01
** Significant at .001

Messages Department Heads and Candidates Remembered Initiating that were Considered Inappropriate

Table 12 shows that department heads did not recall initiating any messages that they remembered being perceived as inappropriate. In general, department heads indicated that initiation of dual career topics were inconsistent with affirmative action guidelines. One department head stated: "Our hands are tied by the rules of affirmative action as well as just decorum and decency not to ask questions in certain areas, like what is your religion, are you married, do you have any children. These are not appropriate questions and we are aware of it." One department head did indicate, however, "It's the candidate who must bring out these human aspects of their lives, if they are relevant to the job."

During the collection of interview data, department heads specifically mentioned eight topics that they thought were inappropriate for them to initiate. These topics were: discussion of the candidate's spouse's career, children, marital status, flexible working hours, spouse's attitude about a geographic

Table 12

Inappropriate Messages Department Heads and Candidates Remembered Initiating

Category	Department Heads n=20		Candidates n=20		Chi-square
	Number of messages	% of total	Number of messages	% of total	χ^2
Spouse's Career	--	–	4	57.16	114.32**
Issues about children	--	–	1	14.29	28.58*
Child Care	--	–	1	14.29	28.58*
Schools for children	--	–	1	14.29	28.58*
Totals	0	–	7	100	

*Significant at .01
**Significant at .001

move, the candidate's attitude about a geographic move, a commuter marriage, and maternity policies .

Messages candidates initiated that were perceived as inappropriate, fell into four categories (see Table 12). Four candidates remembered initiating the topic of their spouse's career (57.16%) and perceiving that department heads thought that the topic was inappropriate for discussion. For example, one candidate remembered an interview in which the department head was attempting, indirectly, to determine marital status. He said, "Is there anybody else in the world who, well let's say, if that person lived somewhere, it would matter to you?" The interviewer then stated, "I am trying to avoid asking an illegal question." The candidate felt she was placed in an awkward situation concerning her spouse. She stated, "I couldn't exactly say 'No, I'm not married.' I was disappointed that he did ask it, because I knew it was going to adversely affect my chances. I felt it was inappropriate, but I didn't see how I could get around it." Other topics candidates remembered as inappropriate to initiate included child care (14.29%), schools for children (14.29%), and issues about children (14.29%). It should be noted that there were few messages that candidates remembered initiating that they perceived as inappropriate topics to discuss. This finding may be attributed to the fact that most department heads indicated that if the candidate brought up an issue, it was usually considered as an important topic to discuss.

Appropriate Messages Heard by Candidates and Department Heads

When department heads were asked what appropriate messages they remembered hearing candidates discuss, seven categories emerged (see Table 13). The highest percentage of messages that department heads remembered candidates talking about was the topic of spouse's career (57.5%). Most

department heads indicated that they felt constrained because of affirmative action guidelines and that they appreciated it when a candidate brought up the spouse's career. In many cases, the department heads indicated that they were willing to assist the spouse in some way such as making contacts at the university or in the surrounding community. Other topics remembered as appropriate for the candidate to initiate included: schools for children (20%), commuter marriage situations (7.5%), child care (7.5%), spouse's attitude about a geographic move (2.5%), children's issues (2.5%), and working late (2.5%).

Appropriate topics candidates remembered hearing department heads discuss fell into five categories (see Table 13).

Table 13

Appropriate Messages Department Heads and Candidates Remembered Hearing

Category	Department Heads n=20		Candidates n=20		Chi-square
	Number of messages	% of total	Number of messages	% of total	χ^2
Spouse's career	23	57.5	2	25.0	25.61*
Schools for children	8	20.0	2	25.0	1.11
Child care	3	7.5	–	–	15.00
Commuter marriages	3	7.5	–	–	15.00
Spouse's attitude re move	1	2.5	–	–	5.00
Children's issues	1	2.5	1	12.5	13.33
Working late	1	2.5	–	–	5.00
EE attitude re move	–	–	2	25.0	50.00**
Nepotism policy	–	–	1	12.5	25.00*
Totals	40	100	8	100	

*Significant at .01
** Significant at .001

Candidates remembered department heads talking about the spouse's career (25%), the candidate's attitude about a geographic move (25%), schools for the candidate's children (25%), children's issues (12.5%), and nepotism policies

(12.5%). Candidates did not recall a large number of messages that department heads initiated. This finding is consistent with the survey data which reported department heads "seldom" initiated dual career topics. In the interviews, department heads indicated that they felt it was inappropriate for them to discuss dual career topics until they were initiated by candidates.

Inappropriate Messages Heard by Department Heads and Candidates

Six categories emerged when department heads were asked what inappropriate dual career issues they remembered hearing a candidate initiate. Department heads recalled nine messages (59.94%) in which candidates said they would not accept the position if a position was not secured for their spouse. Department heads indicated that it was appropriate to bring up the spouse's career, but to demand that the department head find a position, or create a position for the spouse was viewed as inappropriate (see Table 14).

When candidates were asked what inappropriate topics they recalled that interviewers initiated, only three categories emerged (see Table 14). Candidates indicated that issues about children (33.33%), marital status (33.33%), and collaborative publications with the spouse (33.33%) were deemed inappropriate. Thus, of the 20 candidates interviewed only three remembered a total of three messages that were considered inappropriate for a department head to initiate. This finding is consistent with department heads suggesting that they were reluctant to discuss topics unless initiated by the candidate.

Table 14

Inappropriate Messages Department Heads and Candidates Remembered Hearing

Category	Department Heads n=20		Candidates n=20		Chi-square
	Number of messages	% of total	Number of messages	% of total	X^2
Requiring a position for the spouse	9	59.94	–	–	119.88*
Child care	2	13.32	–	–	26.64*
Spouse's career	1	6.66	–	–	13.32
Children's issues	1	6.66	1	33.33	35.57*
Working late	1	6.66	–	–	13.32
Flexible working hours	1	6.66	–	–	13.32
Marital status	–	–	1	33.33	66.66*
Collaborative publishing with spouse	–	–	1	33.33	66.66*
Totals	15	100	3	100	

* Significant at .001

Results of Difference Tests for Memorable Messages

To examine differences between appropriate and inappropriate messages department heads and candidates remembered hearing and initiating, a series of Chi-square analyses were conducted.

A comparison of appropriate messages department heads and candidates remembered initiating revealed four significant differences. Department heads remembered initiating significantly more messages about the topics of schools for children (X^2 (9, N= 40) = 27.46, $p < .01$), quality of life (X^2 (9, N= 40) = 33.30, $p < .001$), and the candidate's attitude about a move (X^2 (9, N= 40) = 22.20, $p < .001$), than did candidates (see Table 11). Candidates, on the other hand, remembered initiating significantly more messages about the topic of spouse's career (X^2 (9, N= 40) = 55.20, $p < .001$) than did department heads. This finding confirmed the MANOVA results which suggested that interviewees initiated the topic of spouse's career more often than did interviewers.

Comparing messages that department heads and candidates considered inappropriate to initiate revealed four significant differences (see Table 12). Candidates remembered initiating the topics of spouse's career (X^2 (3, N= 40)= 114.32, p .001), issues about children (X^2 (3, N = 40) = 28.58, p < .01), child care (X^2 (3, N= 40) = 28.58, p < .01), and schools for children (X^2 (3, N= 40) = 28.58, p < .01), and thinking that department heads viewed these topics as inappropriate whereas department heads did not recall initiating any inappropriate topics. The survey data revealed that department heads viewed these four topics as appropriate for candidates to initiate even though the interview data suggested that some candidates perceived them as inappropriate for a candidate to discuss. As stated earlier, department heads did not consider it appropriate to initiate dual career topics because of affirmative action guidelines. It should be noted that there were only seven messages that candidates remembered as inappropriate for them to initiate; thus, most of the messages that candidates remembered were perceived as appropriate.

Comparisons of appropriate messages department heads and candidates remembered hearing revealed three significant differences (see Table 13). Department heads remembered candidates talking about the spouse's career (X^2 (9, N= 40) = 25.61, p < .01) significantly more than candidates remembered department heads talking about that topic. Again, this finding confirmed the survey data. Candidates remembered department heads discussing the candidate's attitude about a move (X^2 (8, N= 40) = 50, p < .001) and nepotism policies (X^2 (8, N= 40) = 25, p < .01) significantly more than department heads remembered candidates discussing those issues.

Examining the differences between inappropriate messages department heads and candidates remembered hearing revealed five significant differences

(see Table 14). Department heads remembered significantly more messages about the topics of requiring a position for their spouse (X^2 (7, N= 40)= 119.88, p < .001) and child care (X^2 (7, N= 40) = 26.64, p < .001) than candidates remembered these topics being discussed by department heads. Candidates remembered hearing only three messages that they considered inappropriate for department heads to talk about: children's issues (X^2 (7, N= 40) = 35.57, p < .001), marital status (X^2 (7, N= 40) = 66.66, p < .001), and collaborative publishing with a spouse (X^2 (7, N= 40) = 66.66, p < .001). Department heads did not recall that candidates inappropriately initiated these topics.

DISCUSSION

Knowing what to talk about has often been a question in the minds of candidates interviewing for positions. In academia the topics of teaching expertise, research interest, and service are common. Other topics, specifically those of concern to dual career couples, are less well defined. The results from this study suggest that all 15 topics investigated were perceived as appropriate for interviewees to initiate. Topics that were rated highest in appropriateness included: promotions, vacation schedules, and schools for children. On the lower end of the appropriateness scale, yet still "somewhat appropriate" were the topics: children's issues, spouse's career, and a commuter marriage.

The interviews conducted with department heads revealed several reasons why the topics are perceived as appropriate. Interviewers conceptualized the interviewing process as a time to better understand the needs of the candidate. That understanding does not happen, however, if the candidate does not initiate certain issues. One department head voiced, "I understand that people can't unilaterally make decisions any more . . . the

family structure is such that there has to be considerations for both parties." Thus, if issues were important to candidates, then those issues were viewed by department heads as needs that should be addressed.

A prevailing theme espoused by department heads was that if both spouses were not happy, then the candidate would not stay in the position for an extended period of time. Department heads maintained it was better to bring up issues and be very straightforward and honest than to avoid them. They considered the interviews an investment in time and money for the university and the candidate. A department head suggested that if a candidate leaves without answers to important questions, then that individual may not return. Turnover among faculty was perceived as a disadvantage to students and departments. Department heads maintained that having issues out in the open also resulted in better employees. A department head stated, "What happens to candidates' families is essential to helping them be the best possible teachers. I am absolutely convinced of that, and I would give my 100% support for anything I could do to make it a better move or take care of needs within the family."

Candidates also felt it was appropriate for them to initiate dual career issues. One candidate stated, "I think that universities are suddenly becoming aware of these issues [dual career] because they are facing this problem everywhere. It is so common." A department head indicated that four of the last five hires were members of dual career households.

Frequency of Interviewees Initiating Dual Career Topics

While it appeared that dual career issues were perceived as appropriate to initiate, the infrequency with which they were initiated revealed the reluctance of candidates to do so. For example, interviewees indicated that they only

"sometimes" initiated the topics of commuter marriage, children's issues, and spouse's career even though both interviewers and interviewees indicated they were topics were appropriate to initiate.

Although department heads and candidates agreed that it was appropriate for candidates to discuss dual career topics, candidates reported that they frequently did not initiate spouse and family issues. During interviews, females suggested that this finding was particularly true for them. Although candidates perceived that initiating a topic about a spouse would hurt their chances of being hired, one department head stated, "Although I can understand a person being inhibited because they think it might hurt them, it is not true."

Topics Seen as Inappropriate for Interviewees to Initiate

One candidate indicated that initiating any issues that were "women's issues" such as child care, maternity, or children would be a "black mark." The fear of initiating maternity issues may not be completely unfounded. Maternity policies at the universities in this study treated pregnancy as a "disability." In some cases, the employee's colleagues were asked to teach the faculty member's classes when a baby was born. In other cases, maternity leave was taken as sick leave. Several department heads indicated that the faculty member's absence was a problem when trying to find colleagues to take over for extended periods. Perhaps clearer maternity policies for universities are forthcoming, but at the time of this study, there was no official maternity policy for faculty at either of the two participating universities.

In terms of initiating child care issues, one department head remembered hearing a message he considered inappropriate. One interviewee asked, "Do you take care of my kids?" It seemed the department head was more offended by the way the topic was broached than the initiation of the child care topic.

Overall results suggested that child care was an appropriate issue for candidates to discuss.

It also appeared from information gathered in the interviews that some male department heads were more sensitive to spouse issues when the candidate was female. One department head indicated, "I still suppose, we are in the age of a certain amount of male chauvinism and domination of the business and somehow we seem to be a little more concerned when the applicant is female and married, particularly about the spouse."

One department head indicated that frustrations mount when candidates are not open enough about their spouse. He maintained that it is almost always female candidates who are reluctant to discuss spouses. He explained that a female candidate said nothing about her spouse in the interview. Only when she was offered the job, did she say, "I would like for you to do something for my husband." The department head and faculty were not pleased with the timing of the news and indicated that she should have been more open about her spouse during the interview.

One female candidate indicated that she did not bring her spouse with her on the initial interview because that offer had not been made by the department head. In retrospect, the department head indicated to her that he was probably being a little overly sensitive about the spouse issue because he did not want to treat her as part of a couple. He stated that he would have been less self-conscious about bringing it up if the candidate had been a male.

While several department heads indicated that initiating the topic of spouse was appropriate and the results of the study suggested that it was, there were still situations in which candidates perceived initiating a discussion of the spouse as inappropriate. One female indicated that in a telephone interview, as

soon as her spouse's career was mentioned, it was as though the other party hung up the phone, "They stopped listening to me immediately because they just didn't want to be bothered with a husband to fool around with." Another female candidate stated, "I am sure their perception was, 'darn, another two-body problem.' It is frustrating, I am sure, for the university because more women are becoming part of the labor force." Yet, the latter candidate suggested that it may be advantageous for universities to hire couples. She maintained that one could make the argument that if both spouses had degrees from top schools and were capable professors, that the school would be getting a really good deal to employ both. One candidate jokingly said that the only reason he got his position was that another area on campus saw his wife as a real asset.

Most department heads felt that dual career issues should be brought up during the interview, especially if the candidate wanted any type of assistance for the spouse. The area perceived as most inappropriate, however, was for the candidate to, in some way, demand a position for the spouse or indicate that the position would not be accepted if the department head could not secure a position for the spouse.

Appropriate Topics for Interviewers to Initiate

Department heads considered 12 of the 15 topics investigated as appropriate for them to initiate. Interviewers felt that it was appropriate for them to initiate a discussion of promotions, vacation schedules, flexible schedules, transfers, maternity, interviewee's attitude about a move, schools for children, paternity policies, working late, assistance programs, children's issues, and child care. They considered it inappropriate for them to initiate discussion about spouse's career, spouse's attitude about a move, and

commuter marriage. With the exception of commuter marriage, interviewees felt that all dual career topics were appropriate for interviewers to initiate. The topics considered appropriate by interviewers were ones that did not deal specifically with spouse issues. Children and child care were rated as only "somewhat appropriate" for interviewers to initiate. Some department heads indicated that many of the topics investigated had come up during the interview process, yet most of the time candidates had been the one to initiate the discussion. They also mentioned the topics were appropriate areas for discussion, but they did not initiate them because of affirmative action guidelines.

Frequency of Topics Initiated by Interviewers

Even though department heads deemed many of the topics as appropriate for them to initiate, they seldom did so. Topics seldom initiated by interviewers included paternity and maternity policies, assistance programs, child care, spouse's career, spouse's attitude about a move, and commuter marriage. Some department heads in the interviews indicated that maternity and paternity policies were handled through the faculty handbook and they made that document available for candidates. Most department heads indicated, however, that the issues they seldom initiated were against affirmative action guidelines.

Topics Seen as Inappropriate for Interviewers to Initiate

While department heads felt it was appropriate for candidates to initiate dual career issues, they did not think it was appropriate for interviewers to initiate the topics of commuter marriage, spouse's attitude about a move, and spouse's career. Most department heads viewed initiating topics about spouse and family issues as inconsistent with affirmative action guidelines. Most

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indicated that they would not discuss the issue of spouse or family unless the candidate initiated that topic.

Commuter marriage was the only topic candidates considered inappropriate for department heads to discuss; department heads also thought that they should not broach this issue. These two perspectives were congruent in terms of the frequency with they were initiated. Department heads reported that candidates "seldom" initiated a commuter marriage issue, and department heads reported they never did. A department head stated, "Concerning commuter marriages, being very frank, whenever I hear of a person proposing that, I am very weary, because I don't see that situation lasting very long and we don't want to lose a candidate after two years." One department head reported that a candidate left after two years because the spouse could not find a position close to the university, and that a commuter situation was not working for them.

In another situation, a female candidate interviewed for a position and when her spouse could not secure a position with the same university, the couple engaged in a commuter marriage. The department head indicated that he hoped that it would be the male doing most of the commuting because he feared that commuting would detract from her service, research, and possibly class preparation time. Although the department head felt that way about the commuter situation, he did not broach the subject with her. Department heads may be reluctant for employees to enter into a commuter marriage because they feel that a commuter marriage would detract from an employee's job performance, rather than societal expectations as indicated by Polegato and Barras (1984).

Interview data showed that only three department heads remembered candidates initiating the topic of commuter marriage, but they indicated that it was an appropriate topic for interviewees to discuss. Survey data, however, suggested that interviewers thought that the commuter marriage topic was only "somewhat appropriate" for interviewees to talk about.

In the final analysis, however, whether a candidate should initiate the topic of commuter marriage is not altogether clear. This topic was considered by both interviewers and interviewees to be the least appropriate topic and was initiated less often than any other topic. This may be a function of how many couples choose to commute, or it may simply be considered more risky, since commuting takes time that could be construed as taking away from job commitments. One department head revealed that he had a faculty member who was in a commuter marriage where the spouse lived in another state. He said "She has never asked for any consideration. She has assumed her job as a professional, just as anyone else would." Until there are more role models for candidates in terms of commuter marriages, initiating the topic will have to be handled with care. Data suggest that if candidates are reluctant about introducing any topics, this is one that they might avoid because it could be received more negatively than any other topic.

Candidates perceived that all topics, with the exception of commuter marriage, were at least "somewhat appropriate" for the interviewer to initiate, but department heads felt that initiating certain topics, such as spouse and family issues, may violate affirmative action guidelines. Department heads seemed generally willing to discuss most topics, but candidates will have to initiate them if they are to be discussed.

Differences Between Interviewers and Interviewees

Findings from the difference testing procedures identified areas where department heads' and candidates' perceptions differed most. As suggested above, department heads felt it was significantly more appropriate for candidates to initiate spouse and children's issues than the candidate thought it was for them to do so. This finding suggested that department heads felt these issues were appropriate for candidates to initiate even if candidates did not think so. However, the frequency data revealed that department heads initiated most topics significantly less frequently than did interviewees. So while department heads said it was appropriate to discuss dual career issues, they seldom initiated the topics. Perhaps the appropriateness scores reveal some degree of social desirability. Just as department heads may feel constrained by affirmative action guidelines, such guidelines may heighten their awareness of what is socially and politically appropriate.

The interview data confirmed many of the conclusions in the survey data. Department heads remembered candidates initiating the topic of spouse's career more often than candidates remembered department heads talking about that topic. It may be that department heads did not initiate the topic of spouse's career very often, or perhaps since the spouse was an "other-reference" rather than a "self-reference" (Rogers, Kuiper & Kirker, 1977) candidates did not recall the topic being discussed. Candidates remembered very few messages that they felt were perceived as inappropriate by department heads and, department heads claimed it was inappropriate for interviewers to initiate most dual career topics. Several department heads remembered initiating a discussion

of schools for children, and the rationale for discussing this issue was as a positive recruitment tool.

While many candidates initiated the topic of spouse's career and considered that topic as appropriate, a few candidates recalled initiating spouse's career and felt that the topic was viewed as inappropriate by department heads. This attitude, however, was not supported in the survey or interview data. In contrast, department heads indicated they did not initiate many dual career topics because they felt it was not appropriate for them to do so. Social desirability and memory biases can potentially confound self reports such as these. Moreover, nonverbal cues could have been misinterpreted by both parties. While interviewees interpreted silence or lack of discussion as a sign of introducing an inappropriate topic, department heads may simply have been uncomfortable, unskilled, or unaware of how they discussed these issues. Also, interviewers may not have introduced these topics, not so much because they thought the interviewee should, but because dual career topics are still generally considered "women's issues," and most department heads were men. The results of the analyses on the demographic data suggested that males tended to think that interviewees initiated the topic of spouse's career more often than did females. Perhaps some females were reluctant to initiate spouse's career because they were concerned that it would negatively affect their chance for employment.

It was clear from the interview data that department heads remembered "requiring a position for the spouse" as an inappropriate message. Candidates did not recall department heads discussing this subject with them. One topic that a candidate found particularly inappropriate, however, was for a department head to ask how collaborative articles with the candidate's spouse should be

considered with regard to the tenure process. The candidate interpreted the question to mean "How do we know that you are doing your own work?" This candidate was particularly concerned because her husband who was also interviewing for academic positions was never asked that question.

Since this study provides a basis for understanding which topics were considered appropriate for interviewers and interviewees to initiate in a selection interview, the next area provides recommendations for both parties.

Recommendations for Department Heads

The results of this study suggest several recommendations for department heads to consider when interviewing candidates.

1. Departments heads should not initiate the topic of commuter marriage with candidates because it was perceived as inappropriate by interviewees.
2. Department heads should be aware that candidates felt spouse and family issues were appropriate for interviewers to initiate.
3. Department heads should be aware that the candidates do not frequently initiate dual career topics because they feel it may hurt their chances for obtaining employment.
4. Just as department heads indicated that candidates should be straight -forward about issues of concern, so, too, should department heads respond openly and honestly in response to candidates' questions.
5. If child care issues arise, share information from other faculty members and provide candidates with a list of child care facilities.
6. Offer information about schools and resources if candidates have school age children.

7. If the department head does not wish to discuss or is not informed about topics regarding schools or child care, then arrange appointments with people off campus or with other faculty members who would be helpful.
8. Provide information about housing and the community.
9. Tour the city so that the candidate becomes acclimated to the environment.
10. Invite the spouse to visit the city.
11. If the community has excellent schools and resources, use these as selling points to recruit candidates.
12. Set up appointments with individuals inside or outside the faculty who have similar academic interests with the candidate.
13. Offer to make employment contacts for the spouse if the spouse issue has been initiated.

Recommendations to Candidates

The results of this study suggest that the following recommendations may help applicants better understand the role of the interviewer and their own responsibilities and parameters as interviewees:

1. Candidates should be aware that interviewers considered promotions, schools for children, and vacation schedules as "very appropriate" topics for interviewees to initiate. The topics of transfers, attitudes about a move, flexible working hours, maternity and paternity policies, assistance programs, child care, working late, spouse's attitude about a move, children's issues, and spouse's career were seen as "appropriate," while the topic of commuter marriage was considered "somewhat appropriate."
2. Candidates should be knowledgeable about affirmative action guidelines that have an impact on hiring practices in academia. Candidates are advised to become aware of the limitations imposed by affirmative action guidelines regarding appropriate and inappropriate topics for interviewers to initiate. Armed with this knowledge, candidates will have a clearer understanding of the issues that interviewers do not usually initiate.
3. While the evidence is not conclusive, most department heads indicated that initiating the topics investigated in this study did not adversely affect a decision to hire. Most department heads were willing to assist candidates with family issues.
4. If candidates choose to discuss a spouse's career, most department heads indicated that it was important to initiate requests for assistance for the spouse during the interviewing process.
5. Candidates are advised not to demand or insist that department heads secure a position for their spouse.

6. When asking about flexible schedules and working hours, candidates should be careful not to convey an attitude that they are reluctant to contribute the number of hours needed to do the job. Candidates should realize that broaching this issue could lead to negative impressions.
7. Candidates should also use time beyond the interview with the department head to initiate important topics. They may suggest a meeting with faculty members who have similar interests.
8. Women candidates, in particular, should become less reluctant to discuss family and children's issues in the initial interview and realize if they want to discuss these issues it is considered their responsibility to initiate them. Interviewers indicated that the job candidate would have to be the one to initiate dual career issues.

Until there are more dual career couples in academia, many questions, such as those raised in this study, will remain of interest. Regardless of whether department heads say it is appropriate to discuss such topics, candidates may not feel completely comfortable doing so until it becomes more common. More female faculty and female department heads, as well as dual career individuals, are likely to contribute to this increased comfort level. The dual career issue is not going to go away, rather it is one that will continue to be addressed as interviewer awareness is heightened about this subject.

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